

QUESTION RE CONFESSION OF PETER
Answered by Willis E. Bishop

Matthew 16:16 -- This is the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi. You remember there is a Caesarea on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and Caesarea Philippi is inland, so they should not be confused. One of the origins of the Jordan river flows out of the mountain at Caesarea Philippi, and as Christ and the disciples stood before that tremendous set of rocks there, Peter makes the confession in verse 16: "Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

When the question was brought up someone mentioned a commentary which pointed that out that the confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" is an interpolation. What do we mean by an "interpolation"? It means that someone wrote that in, and it was not in the original language.

That is not correct. I went back to my sources, for example the textual commentary on the Greek New Testament by the United Bible Societies (which is used almost worldwide), and they list absolutely no variation in this verse whatsoever, and those words are there as the words of the Apostle Peter. Then I went to the Majority Text footnotes, which lists the Greek text as it is found in 95 percent or more of the Greek texts, and it has footnotes where there are variations, and there is not a single variant in those footnotes either. These are Peter's words and confession.

Then, I have a Bible called the "Variorum Bible." It is an English Bible, and at the bottom there are footnotes where there may have been a variant that appeared in some manuscript along the way. That is a little older work. In the Variorum Bible there is absolutely no mention of a variant or the possibility of this being an interpolation. Also in the Nestle's Greek text, which is used by many, many scholars -- there is no mention at all of a variant.

So, I say with assurance that Matthew 16:16 and the confession of Peter is not an interpolation -- it is a part of the original inspired Word of God.

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